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Tuesday, August 22, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

CHARLES ON SIXERS

Barkley 'shocked and disappointed if the Sixers don't make the playoffs.' 16

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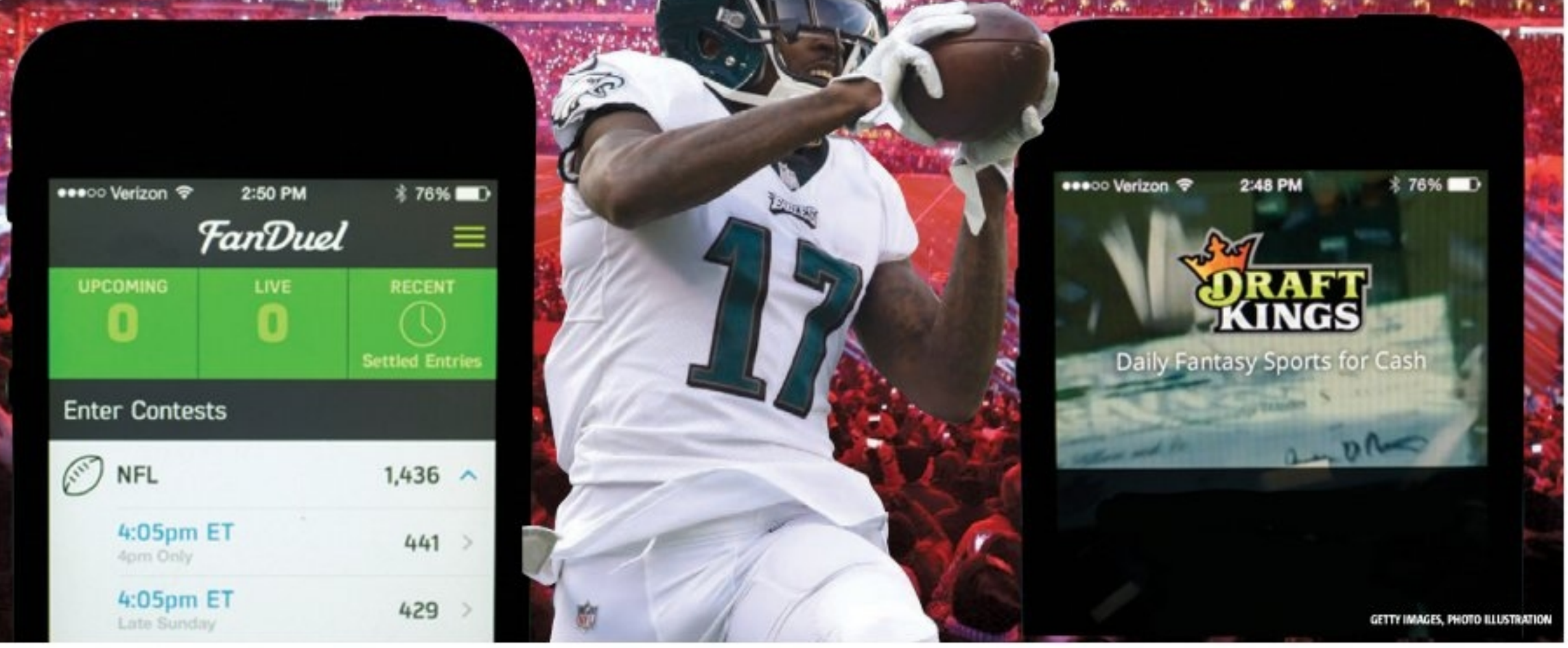

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ERIN TIERNAN, WEB REPORTER

Good morning! We hope you enjoyed the solar eclipse yesterday, but not the way that Trump did. He ignored warnings from NASA and stared up at the sun without any eye protection. Aye aye aye! Find out more at **metro.us/president-trump.**

GETTY IMAGES

J&J ORDERED TO PAY $417M OVER TALC CANCER RISKS

A California jury ordered Johnson & Johnson to pay $417 million to a woman who claimed she developed ovarian cancer after using the company's talc-based products like Johnson's Baby Powder for feminine hygiene. The Los Angeles Superior Court jury's verdict in favor of California resident Eva Echeverria was the largest yet in lawsuits alleging J&J failed to adequately warn consumers about the cancer risks of its talc-based products. "We are grateful for the jury's verdict on this matter and that Eva Echeverria was able to have her day in court," Mark Robinson, her lawyer, said in a statement. The verdict included $70 million in compensatory damages and $347 million in punitive damages. It was a major setback for J&J, which faces 4,800 similar claims nationally and has been hit with over $300 million in verdicts by juries in Missouri.

SPANISH POLICE KILL BARCELONA ATTACKER

2 Spanish police shot dead a man they suspect was the Islamist militant who drove a van into a Barcelona crowd last week, killing 13 people. Ending a five-day manhunt, police tracked 22-year-old Younes Abouyaaqoub to a rural area near Barcelona. They said they shot him after he held up what appeared to be an explosives belt. Police gave few immediate details of the incident in Subirats, saying they had called in a bomb squad to approach the man's body after gunning him down. Abouyaaqoub had been on the run since Thursday evening, after he drove at high speed into throngs of people strolling along Barcelona's most famous avenue, Las Ramblas, in Spain's worst militant attack in over a decade. Islamic State claimed responsibility and police believe the attack was planned by a dozen accomplices.

SOLAR ECLIPSE IN PHILLY

3 The Franklin Institute provided special tents made of solar filtering plastic to allow viewers to watch the eclipse together. PHOTO BY HAYDEN MITMAN

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

TEXAS SCHOOL REMOVES CONFEDERATE STATUES

4 The University of Texas at Austin removed four statues tied to the Confederacy from its campus early on Monday morning, saying they had become symbols of white supremacy at a time of protests and fierce debate about race and the legacy of America's Civil War. White nationalists rallied earlier this month against proposals to take down a similar statue in Charlottesville, Virginia, and one woman was killed when a man crashed his car into a crowd of anti-racism counterprotesters. The violence triggered the biggest domestic crisis yet for President Donald Trump, who provoked anger across the political spectrum for not immediately condemning white nationalists and for praising "very fine people" on both sides of the fight.

SAILORS MISSING AFTER US SHIP, TANKER COLLIDE

5 Ten U.S. sailors were missing after a collision between a destroyer and a tanker near Singapore, the second involving a U.S. warship and a merchant ship in Asia in about two months, triggering a fleet-wide probe of operations and training. The guided-missile destroyer John S. McCain and the tanker Alnic MC collided while the warship was heading to Singapore for a routine port call. The collision tore a hole in the warship's waterline, flooding compartments that included a crew sleeping area, the U.S. Navy said. "Initial reports indicate John S. McCain sustained damage to her port side aft," it said in a statement. "There are currently 10 sailors missing and five injured." U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said Chief of Naval Operations Admiral John Richardson would conduct a broad investigation into U.S. naval operations after the collision.

FAST FACT

Each year, the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health asks a sample of adults to identify health topics that are a "big problem" for children and teens.

- Bullying/cyberbullying 61%
- Not enough exercise 60%
- Unhealthy eating 57%
- Drug abuse 56%
- Internet safety 55%

Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital

Furrydelphia: Inside Philly's first furries convention

Furries open up to Metro about the fringe fetish: "It's an escape from normal life."

CASSIE HEPLER
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

The furry fandom finally made its way to Philly.

Before being approved for this story, Metro was vetted by the organizer of Furrydelphia, a wolf-like character in a business suit known only as Drayne. The 23-year-old is an architect by day and lives in King of Prussia. Drayne walks with a limp and is well-known among the local furries; the don of the Philly furry mafia if you will. After he realized we weren't there to mock his flock of furries, we were in.

Philadelphia's first furry convention was held at the Doubletree Hotel in KOP from Aug. 18-20 with rooms blocked off with a full weekend of activities. Attendees were there for two reasons: furry fun and charity.

Furrydelphia partnered with the Bella-Reed Pit Bull Rescue to help raise money for the shelter. A small pen of puppies greeted attendees inside the Dealer's Den. Hand sanitizer was key as the puppies were not immunized and one was already adopted a few hours into the event.

So why all the fixation on these fur costumes? For some, it's about artistic expression, for others, escape.

"My mom started teaching me to sew when I was 6," said Will H., 30, from Delaware, owner of Out of the Blue Creations. "In college, I learned sculpting and studied the psychology of children."

He dubs himself the "poor man's suit maker" as his pricing is considered low at $850 for a partial suit and $1,100 for a full suit. Sometimes he will create a custom character. Aspiring furries who don't know what they want to be can purchase "adopts," furry lingo for a random fur suit.

"I always drew furry art in college, joined a local community and went from there," said Kimmi Cocoa, 23, from Delaware who alternates between three characters. "Felicia is a honeybear. The one I love the most is Dag, a dog and a representation of me."

Will H. explains that furries can go to a Comicon like a subfandom. For instance, if you are a fan of the supernatural world, there's a con that fits. His character, a Broadway quality headpiece lion with movable fangs and jaw, wears armor and at the Renn Faire, it works. Working full time, he does this in his spare time and doesn't sleep much. "Maybe two to three hours a night," he says.

"It is an escape from normal life. Where else can you go to see a couple of dogs talking about Pickle Rick?" said Lady Rain, 29, from Virginia, who was the guest of honor and graphic designer for Furrydelphia.

Furry fancom radio Furcast.fm owner Fayroe, 27, from Buffalo, N.Y., hosts a radio show every Saturday that covers comedy to politics to the world of furries and is hopeful for Philly, even with low attendance at "a first-year con."

"I do not intend for Furrydelphia to be one and done," said head furry Drayne.

Participants at Furrydelphia, Philly's first furry convention.

The sights of Furrydelphia include costume options. ALL PHOTOS CASSIE HEPLER

Harold Slutsky, DMD ORTHODONTIST

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Lady MC Bahamadia's razor-sharp lyrics set her apart in Philly's hip-hop heritage

Philly is known for many of its male MCs, but rapper Bahamadia has been repping the city since the '90s.

MICHAEL BUTLER
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From '80s stars like DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince to current chart-toppers like Meek Mill, Philly's hip-hop heritage has always been rich. But less well known is MC Bahamadia, a razor-sharp lyricist who dropped her first album in 1996. Now she is emerging as an integral part of Philly's hip-hop tradition, having earning the respect of hip-hop lovers worldwide and reputation of a timeless trendsetter.

"Some people perceive me as old-school and others consider me to be a '90s rapper since I got a [record] deal in the '90s," Bahamadia said. "I just for once would like people to know from the source who Bahamadia is, but not too much, because I believe artists' work is supposed to evoke feelings and start conversations."

With influences ranging from jazz legend Ella Fitzgerald to German electronic group Kraftwerk, Bahamadia creates music that reflects the voice of the people.

"[My debut album] "Kollage" was the first project of its kind where a female hip-hop artist wrote her own lyrics and co-produced a project," she said.

Having collaborated with hip-hop icons like The Roots, Bahamadia enjoys her status as an urban legend in hip-hop circles and takes solace in letting her work speak for itself.

"I come from the last era of individuality where you got signed with your own organic voice," she said.

Mindful of her role as an elder statesman, Bahamadia bridges the gap between a generation raised on complex wordplay and one that is fonder of catchy beats and hooks.

"I have respect for the Kendrick [Lamar]s, the J. Coles, Vince Staples, Vic Mensa and any other artists carrying on traditions of organic hip-hop. I think that's the dopest thing. Hip-hop doesn't belong to any one person," she said. "It belongs to all of us. Each generation's creative offerings are indicative of the times."

Bahamadia's creative energy is a direct reflection of the music she enjoys, so her favorite female MC of the moment should come as no surprise. "I love Cardi B so much because I can relate to the resilience of a person wanting to be better and be the person that they want to be."

While coming off extremely humble in person, Bahamadia's affinity for creative individuality and high standards for hip-hop come from a very proud place. Perhaps most notably, Bahamadia's legacy is strengthened by her courage to be herself in an industry often known for putting women in a box.

"I was always androgynous and another thing that protected from being exploited was being a full-grown woman when I signed. I was already 27 with two kids so I wasn't impressionable. I was drug-free and wasn't trying to self-medicate so I had a clear mind."

With new music on the way and a highly supportive international fan base, Bahamadia continues to captivate listeners, one hot bar at a time.

Three female Philly MCs to know

- **Lady B:** Lady B owns the distinction of being one of the first female MCs in hip-hop history and continues to share her love for hip-hop culture with listeners today as a radio personality and host.
- **Ms. Jade:** Skillful MC Ms. Jade earned the attention of music heavyweights like Timbaland, who would ultimately produce Jade's 2002 debut album, "Girl Interrupted."
- **Eve:** Famous for her role as rap crew Ruff Ryders' First Lady, South Philly native Eve has spent time at the top of the charts as an MC and on the big screen in films like "Barbershop."

Bahamadia has been rapping in Philly since the mid-'90s. PROVIDED

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PHILLY NEEDS TO CHANGE ITS STREET SAFETY APPROVAL PROCESS

Some Philadelphia politicians have opposed the creation of bike lanes. GETTY IMAGES

It's troubling that city law allows publicly elected officials to block the installation of bike lanes.

RANDY LOBASSO

Analysis

Essentially, after a chaotic public meeting in July, Councilman Kenyatta Johnson rejected plans for a West Center City safety improvement pilot project. The reason? "Near neighbor" concerns. Essentially, it was decided most people in the vicinity of Lombard Street were worried enough that physically protecting the bike lane in front of their houses would deny them their privilege to pull over into the bike lane to unloaded groceries.

"The overwhelming majority of feedback from residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposal is strongly opposed," noted Johnson in a letter to Philadelphia's director of complete streets. "In light of that feedback, I cannot support the current proposal."

Though about 100 people in the near vicinity sent letters opposed to the project, at least three times that have sent letters to Johnson in support, using the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia's email system.

Though so many people who use Lombard and South streets to get to and from the South Street Bridge — the most-biked commuter bridge in the state of Pennsylvania — the fact that not all these people were "near neighbors" made their opinions (and their need for a safe commute) less valid.

Councilman Johnson, who represents the area, gets final say on what is safe and what isn't because Philadelphia City Council gave themselves that right in 2012.

The effort is not over. But it's troubling the city law allows publicly elected officials to block the installation of bike lanes, which require ordinances for any reason whatsoever — even if, as was this case, the project is a temporary pilot.

In this case, Johnson was responding to near neighbors. But it doesn't have to work that way. Hypothetically, if a single, politically connected big-money donor wants or doesn't want something, the councilperson could side with that single donor. There is no official vote or protocol when it comes to these things, and the opinion of engineers and experts often matters little, if at all.

This is all pretty unique to Philadelphia. Not only that ordinances have to be introduced to install many safety projects, but that Council members get to decide whether or not they'll introduce that ordinance.

Such a system has created unsafe streets where people are regularly injured or killed while politicians wait for consensus.

And that could take years. Case in point: The West Chestnut Street bike lane currently being constructed between 45th and 34th streets. Getting to this point actually took six years of work and advocacy to form a consensus.

I'm not saying the public should have no input on bike and pedestrian safety projects. But Philadelphia should have an open forum with consistent rules across the board when it comes to approving or rejecting bike lane and pedestrian safety projects. We should not have to wait on a politician to decide if a particular dangerous intersection is worth his or her political capital.

Philly's politicians may be good at lots of things, but last time I checked, none of them are civil engineers. It's time Council gives up this unneeded privilege it gave itself five years ago and leave street safety to the experts.

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DraftKings, FanDuel, fantasy sports ready for a monster 2017 NFL season

The latest on the fantasy sports industry.

MATT BURKE
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A merger between DraftKings and FanDuel, the two biggest daily fantasy sports companies in the United States, was thought to be a slam dunk deal earlier this year. In June, however, the Federal Trade Commission put an abrupt halt on the potential merger — citing antitrust concerns. If the two companies had merged, they would have owned 90 percent of the daily fantasy market in the U.S.

Scared off by more potential days in court, DraftKings — based in Boston — and FanDuel — based in New York — agreed to instead remain competitors – and suddenly, the heated daily fantasy war is back on.

In addition, DraftKings co-founder and Chief Revenue Officer Matt Kalish told Metro that the merger being back on the table anytime soon is not happening.

"It's over with," Kalish said. "We're not pursuing a merger with FanDuel at all anymore. Our team has turned the page and we've moved on."

Had a merger occurred, DraftKings CEO Jason Robbins was in line to become the CEO of the new combined company. FanDuel CEO Nigel Eccles was going to be put in the chairman position of the company, but was not going to be involved in day-to-day operations. Instead, Eccles is now back in the business of trying to be one step ahead of Kalish and Robbins.

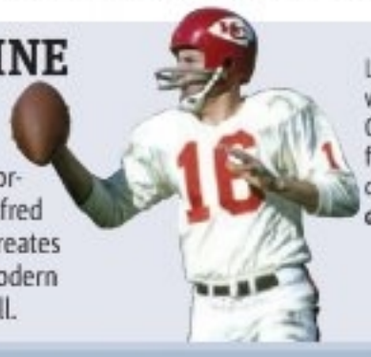
Eccles and FanDuel this month shut down its site in the United Kingdom in order to focus on its bread and butter — American football.

"As we approach the NFL season, we are allocating all of our resources toward ramping up a U.S. product that consumers love and building out complementary fantasy sports products,"

TIMELINE

1962

Oakland, California, native Wilfred Winkenbach creates the basis of modern fantasy football.



Len Dawson was one of the QBs taken in the first-ever fantasy draft in 1962. GETTY IMAGES

1997: CBS launches the first free fantasy football website.

2009: Daily Fantasy Sports site FanDuel is launched.

2012: Daily Fantasy Sports site DraftKings is launched.

2014: An estimated 33 million people play fantasy football.

September 2015: DraftKings and FanDuel engage in an unprecedented advertising war.

December 2015: States consider regulation of DraftKings and FanDuel.

2017: Merger between DraftKings and FanDuel fails

1962 — 1997 — 2009 — 2012 — 2014 — 2015 — 2017

GRAPHIC BY JACLYN GABLER, MATT BURKE, METRO

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Eccles said (via The Independent — Ireland). "There are over 53 million people playing fantasy sports in the U.S. and we are investing all of our resources on that market."

Return to glory?

Two years ago at this time, you couldn't go one commercial break on ESPN without seeing a 30 second spot from either DraftKings or FanDuel. The two companies were at each other's throats for gamers and dollars, and it resulted in one of the biggest advertising battles in the history of U.S. television.

Just because that was the peak of advertising, though, doesn't mean that it was the peak period for the industry. Kalish and DraftKings insist that they've never been more popular.

"I think it's already well past where it was two years ago," Kalish told Metro. "We've been growing at a 30 percent clip, year after year. We have more users than ever. We have more players playing more contests than we've ever had. So the idea that 2015 was the peak point is not accurate. I think there was a lot of buzz around the industry then, because I think a lot of people were learning about it for the first time.

> *"I think it's already well past where it was two years ago."*
> Kalish

"We will be running a certain amount of advertising during football season because that's our peak acquisition period, but it won't be like it was two years ago. There will be a small window where we run a good amount of advertising — the first few weeks of the football season are very strong. So we'll be in the market, but it won't be anything like 2015 was. It will be a much more reasonable level that makes sense for our company."

Adapt or die

Both DraftKings and FanDuel are introducing new gaming options for the 2017 NFL season. DraftKings is offering contests in which there is no player salary cap like the way the traditional daily fantasy games work. Instead, users can pick players in "pick 'em" mode as users are asked to select players from "tiers" of available players.

FanDuel, meanwhile, is going back to the future and is now offering season-long fantasy leagues.

Not just football

While the NFL season remains, far and away, the most lucrative time of year for DraftKings and FanDuel – there are some niche sports that have begun to thrive in the daily fantasy world.

"PGA tour golf is up 50 percent over last year," Kalish told Metro. "It lends itself perfectly for fantasy. NASCAR and UFC are very popular. These sports have big events that are a lot more scarce, they're not even weekly — so when the events come around players get really excited about them. It's something different and new."

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Excited solar eclipse watchers line up for a chance to view Monday's event in a telescope at the Franklin Institute. ALL PHOTOS HAYDEN MITMAN

Hundreds view solar eclipse outside the Franklin Institute

People from all over the city, and from across the country, flocked to the Franklin Institute to view Monday's once-in-a-lifetime eclipse.

HAYDEN MITMAN
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The day's soft gray cloud-cover did little to dampen the mood of hundreds of solar eclipse viewers who gathered outside of the Franklin Institute, on the Ben Franklin Parkway, on Monday, while they all waited for the once-in-a-lifetime chance to see a solar eclipse.

"This is just incredible," said Michael Fallon, 49, of Massachusetts, as he viewed the event through special glasses that were intended to protect his eyes.

Fallon was in the area on a trip with his family and he joked that he dragged his children Cameron, 15 and Lauren, 13, out of bed and over to the Franklin Institute in the hopes of helping them experience the event.

A total solar eclipse over North America, like Monday's, is a pretty unique event. The last one happened on July 11, 1991, and, even then, its path of totality — or the areas where the sun would be totally blocked by the moon — only passed over one state: Hawaii.

The last total solar eclipse to pass over the contiguous states happened on Feb. 26, 1979, when it could be seen from states in the Pacific Northwest.

Franklin Institute staff and volunteers performed science exhibitions in the yard outside of the Franklin Institute, while there were areas set up for the public to view the solar event. Just seconds of looking at the sun can damage the eyes due to the massive amounts of UV light released by the sun.

To protect viewers, The Franklin Institute provided many with individual glasses made of cardboard that they could wear while looking at the sun. But, institute volunteer Dave Fitzpatrick said that there were so many people at the day's events that the Franklin Institute quickly ran out of glasses for everyone.

"People have been so desperate to get the glasses," he said. "As fast as they come in, they are gone. … We knew today would be exciting, but this is just way beyond what we expected."

In order to allow everyone a chance to see the solar eclipse, the Franklin Institute also had "sunspotters" — a sort of wooden solar telescope — set up to allow viewers to see the sun's image reflected against a white background.

And, vision safety during an eclipse is important, noted photographer Ned Levi, 70, of Philadelphia, who said one of his friends suffered significant vision loss due to looking directly at the sun during an eclipse.

"I know someone who was blinded, well, nearly blinded, from the eclipse in the Northwest 38 years ago," said Levi as he watched Monday's eclipse through a camera outfitted with a special filter.

Levi said he's a fan of astronomical events and, with something like a solar eclipse being such a rare event, he wanted to make sure he was out to view the spectacle among many interested viewers.

"This is an astronomical event that only occurs around once every hundred years for most people," he said, noting that if you want to see solar eclipses more regularly, you'd have to be willing to travel the world.

If you haven't had a chance to see Monday's eclipse, the next total solar eclipse is expected to pass over North America in seven years — this time, with Philadelphia much closer to the path of totality — on April 8, 2024.

Volunteer Dave Fitzpatrick explains how to use a "sunspotter" solar telescope.

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Is Joss Whedon a hypocrite?

Talk about a bad feminist.
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Joss Whedon — supposed champion of women who brought us "Buffy" — is maybe a bad dude. At least according to this #scathingessay written by his ex-wife, Kai Cole.

In a blog post for The Wrap, Cole details infidelities and shenanigans abound during their 16-year-marriage, and calls him a "hypocrite preaching feminist ideals."

Apparently, Whedon claimed he was a feminist, but essentially used that as an excuse to creep on women.

"I believed, everyone believed, that he was one of the good guys, committed to fighting for women's rights, committed to our marriage, and to the women he worked with... But I now see how he used his relationship with me as a shield, both during and after our marriage, so no one would question his relationships with other women or scrutinize his writing as anything other than feminist." Damn, Cole! Hot take!

Here's the question though — will it actually make a difference in his career? I mean, I guess we'll see. But I'm not exactly hopeful.

Jay Z would like to clarify elevator-gate

Methinks the sir doth protest too much.

Jay Z would like to make sure you know that the only time he and Solange ever disagreed was the aptly named elevator incident — you know, that time when she kicked him in the elevator after the Met Gala.

Jay says that the 2014 incident was just standard family drama. "We had one disagreement ever. Before and after, we've been cool," he said in a recent interview. "She's like my sister. I will protect her." Uh, protect her from what? Also, it seems like you were the one who needed protection, but mmkay.

"We've always had a great relationship," Beyonce's husband added. OK, sure, whatever. I'm just not buying it, but whatever helps you sleep at night, my dude.

Rose and Bobby are expecting another kid

Rose Byrne and Bobby Cannavale, arguably one of Hollywood's most low-key couples, are expecting a second baby. Aw!

The "Bridesmaids" actress confirmed that she has a uterus full of fetus — that's how that works, right? — in a recent interview with Australia's Jones publication. She dropped the news super casually, as one does. "I'm a little tired but feeling good. Everyone was very sweet on set today, and you always get a little bit more attention when you're pregnant, which is fabulous." OK, Rose, I see you!

The couple, who have been together since 2012, already share a very adorable 17-month-old named Rocco. Cannavale features him heavily on his Instagram, for which I am thankful.

Also, they apparently live in a Brooklyn brownstone, which is just so authentic of them, you know?

Anyway, congratulations you two!

I approve. You're welcome.

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Don't mess with Iron Fist and his pals.
ALL PHOTOS SARAH SHATZ/NETFLIX

Finn Jones talks DJing, 'Defenders' and Donald Trump

The "Iron Fist" actor thinks the president lacks compassion.

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Playing a superhero on TV can be a rough gig at times. Just ask "Iron Fist" star Finn Jones.

The 29-year-old actor is back as the kung-fu-kicking billionaire Danny Rand in Marvel's "The Defenders," which debuted on Netflix over the weekend. While it's been a fun role for the "Game of Thrones" alum, that doesn't mean he hasn't earned a few bumps and bruises along the way.

"The easiest way to describe it is I dislocated my hip," Jones tells Metro of his nasty leg injury prior to filming the miniseries. "Also, I tore like a really deep muscle in my adductor. Because my hip was out of place, it wasn't healing correctly. That happened in 'Iron Fist' and I pretty much had that ongoing injury throughout 'The Defenders.'"

Luckily, he was able to power through the pain in order to pull off his awesome martial-arts moves on the show. Ahead, Jones talks more about his "Defenders" experience, his secret musical side and his thoughts on the role of heroes in the Donald Trump era.

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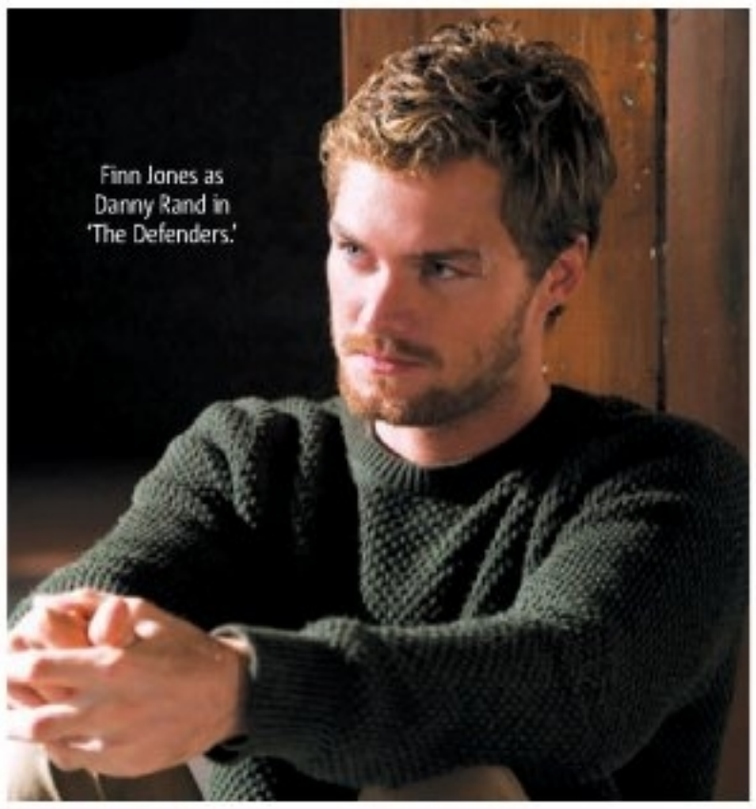
You've been spending a lot of time in New York filming "Iron Fist" and "The Defenders." How's the Big Apple treating you?
I live in Brooklyn and I f—king love this city, man. There's a reason why they call it the greatest city in the world. The thing I love about it the most is how much diversity there is here. There's such a mix of different cultures, peoples and walks of life, but everyone is united under this sense of being a New Yorker.

Society has plenty of villains at the moment, but there doesn't seem to be many heroes. Does the real world need a superhero right now?
I think what the world desperately needs right now is better understanding. There's a lot of confusion, anger, emotion and ignorance. I think ignorance is the biggest problem. Moving forward, we really need to start listening to each other and we need to start reaching out our hands to help and understand rather than to fight. All of this conflict is just going to push us further and further down the road to destruction and chaos. It's not a good way to be.

We need to be compassionate. It can be really f—king difficult to be compassionate when we don't understand the other side of the argument. But we need to do that, because f—k me, the president isn't compassionate. If we haven't got that guy being compassionate, then we need to do it ourselves. We need to stop getting caught up in the little things of the world. We need to start seeing the bigger picture. If we don't, it's going to be too late.


Finn Jones as Danny Rand in 'The Defenders.'

When you're not kicking butt on TV, you also make music. Should we expect DJ Iron Fist to bring the beats stateside anytime soon?
To be honest, I keep my music quite modest. I like to play alone, you know what I mean? Music is such a personal thing for me. It's not something I really like to merge with my acting world. But it's a huge passion of mine. Music means a lot to me.

Are Daenerys Targaryen's dragons on "Game of Thrones" more intimidating than the Dragon of K'un-Lun on "Iron Fist?"
Well, we haven't seen the Dragon of K'un-Lun yet, so it's difficult to call it on that. But the "Game of Thrones" dragons are pretty awesome. It's hard to draw a comparison to the "Game of Thrones" dragons, but I'm going to have to say Khaleesi's dragons, hands down.

Since you're a fight fan, who has the better chest tattoo: Iron Fist or Conor McGregor?
Oh McGregor, for sure. That [gorilla] is f—king awesome. It's way cooler.

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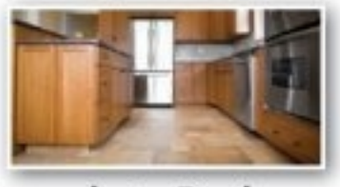
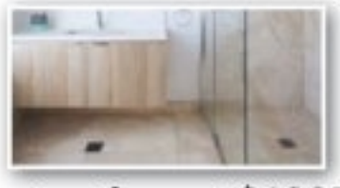

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The SmokeShack Rotolo (left) and the Chick'n Parm (right) are the result of a collaboration between comfort-food titans Pizzeria Vetri and Shake Shack. PROVIDED

Pizzeria Vetri and Shake Shack team up on special edition menu items

It's a double dose of comfort-food bliss!

JENNIFER LOGUE
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One of Philly's most beloved pizza spots, Pizzeria Vetri, is teaming up with burger and milkshake mavens Shake Shack on two limited edition menu items that will be available at select Shake Shack and Pizzeria Vetri locations from Sept. 1 through Sept. 10.

"I love doing things with like-minded people. Shake Shack has always stayed true to their vision of using great ingredients and giving amazing hospitality," says Pizzeria Vetri mastermind, Chef Marc Vetri. "Doing collaborations with them is always a fun time because it gets the creative juices flowing."

The first item is the SmokeShack Rotolo ($7.00), which is a fun, extra meaty twist on the signature Pizzeria Vetri Rotolo. It features ground beef, all-natural smoked Niman Ranch bacon, Shack cheese sauce and chopped cherry pepper. It will be available at all Pizzeria Vetri locations in Philadelphia as well as D.C. alongside the original. There's a chance it could even pop up on the menu after the collaboration is over.

"The rotolo will be a special thing that we break out every now and again," Vetri says. "It probably won't be a staple on the menu though."

The second item is the Chick'n Parm ($6.99) sandwich that features a crispy chicken breast slathered with marinara sauce from Pizzeria Vetri, fresh mozzarella and basil. It will be available at select Shake Shack locations in Philly (University City, Center City and in the King of Prussia Mall) and in D.C. at its Logan Circle shop.

Excited? Luckily, September is only a few weeks away but until then, you can at least salivate over the photos of the SmokeShack Rotolo and the Chick'n Parm.

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wellbeing

Mushrooms, an overlooked superfood

Mushrooms have medicinal properties, aiding in immunity, cognitive function, gut health, skincare, weight loss and stress reduction. ISTOCK

Chemist Tero Isokauppila talks us through the many health benefits of fungi.

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You've heard all about kale, turmeric and moringa. But did you know that mushrooms are also a superfood? The umami-rich fungi have many health benefits, from improving skincare to reducing anxiety. It all depends on which type of mushroom and how you prepare it.

Tero Isokauppila, chemist, plant nutritionist, mushroom forager and author of the forthcoming book "Healing Mushrooms: A Practical and Culinary Guide to Using Mushrooms for Whole Body Health," out in October, talks us through the healthiest 'shrooms we should be incorporating into our diet. Also the founder of Four Sigmatic, a company that sells mushroom elixirs, coffees, teas and more healthful concoctions, Isokauppila gives us tips on how to best harness the power of the superfood.

The science of functional mushrooms

Beyond being a good source of fiber, protein and vitamins, our fungal friends also have healing properties — depending on which kind. Isokauppila clarifies that certain mushrooms are "functional," meaning they contain medicinal properties. Some that fall into that category you've likely heard of — enoki, shitake, maitake, oyster mushrooms — while others are more obscure — cordyceps and chaga and reishi. While they all can be used in cooking, some mushrooms, such as chanterelles, morels and cremini, don't provide the same medicinal benefits and are strictly culinary.

Four Sigmatic Chaga Mushroom Elixir
INSTAGRAM.COM/FOURSIGMATIC

Mellow mushrooms to treat anxiety

One of the healthiest mushrooms, reishi, is known as "queen of the mushrooms" and has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for centuries. It's a powerful adaptogen, meaning it helps the body fight stress and bolster immunity, Isokauppila explains. As far as consuming it, reishi is typically made into an extract and dissolved in liquid form. Four Sigmatic sells a stress reducing reishi hot cocoa.

Oyster mushrooms, which you can enjoy more traditionally in soups and stir-fries, are chockful of B vitamins, which help calm you, release serotonin and also improve the skin.

Antioxidants and immunity

The king to reishi's queen would be chaga, Isokauppila says, which is one of the highest sources of antioxidants of any food in the world. Antioxidants in chaga help with skin and hair health, immunity and contain cancer-fighting compounds.

Because chaga is naturally bitter, Isokauppila recommends first trying it as an extract in coffee or chocolate, bitters that our palette is already accustomed to.

Weight-loss

You're likely familiar with shiitake and maitake mushrooms, a popular culinary choice in Asian cuisine. Maitake aids in weight-loss because it stabilizes blood sugar and improves digestion, Isokauppila explains, as does shiitake, because it helps detox the liver and lower cholesterol.

Cooking with mushrooms

According to Isokauppila, you really shouldn't eat mushrooms raw — more than just because they taste so much better cooked. "Mushrooms are not bioavailable raw," he explains. "They need heat and lipids to unlock the health benefits." The process of heating can also remove toxins.

If you'd like to enjoy in a tea or chocolate, you'll have to use a tincture. You can make one on your own or purchase mushroom extracts at Whole Foods or other natural product stores.

Alcohol can help extract the nutrients, too. Visit Metro.us for Isokaupilla's "Corydsex on the beach," recipe, which mixes cordyceps extract with vodka and fruit juice.

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Cutler says no one should worry about Jeffery

After coaches said Alshon Jeffery was "behind," his former quarterback says there's nothing to worry about.

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"We feel very positive about the progress that we're making. This training camp, it's a long grind. There are ups and downs. I thought Alshon looked good. It was a good step forward."

Eagles offensive coordinator Frank Reich, on Alshon Jeffery

Alshon Jeffery has missed a lot of practice reps with his injured shoulder. GETTY IMAGES

Alshon Jeffery wasn't at his best in the Eagles' second preseason game against the Bills.

A few days after making his Philly debut, Eagles quarterback coach Mike Groh said of Jeffery: "I think he's behind. Anytime you miss the amount of time he did. He's a little bit behind but fortunately, we have time for him to catch up on all that."

But Jeffery doesn't buy into the analysis offered by Groh, who also coach Jeffery in Chicago. He minimized the time he missed, mostly due to a nagging shoulder injury, saying "I'll be alright."

In town for the Eagles joint practices with the Dolphins, the quarterback who knows Jeffery better than any other echoed the support for Jeffery.

"He'll be fine," Cutler, who left a potential commentary job with Fox to return to the field to replace injured Ryan Tannehill with Miami, said. "I don't know what's going on here or where he is in the system, but as long as he's healthy he's going to produce. He knows football, if he's healthy that wouldn't be a guy I would worry about."

Cutler was Jeffery's quarterback — when healthy — for his entire time in Chicago, logging nine seasons under center for the Bears. He knows about Jeffery's catch radius, and also knows Jeffery is a fine physical specimen and a gifted football mind.

"He's super smart, knows football, has great feel," Cutler said. "I think he's one of those natural guys who knows where the ball should be thrown, natural hands, can throw a block... When he's heathy and rolling he's one of the best out there."

Another Dolphin, cornerback Byron Maxwell, got his first taste covering Jeffery and also was impressed.

"He's very physical getting off the line," Maxwell, who played in Philly for one season before being traded to Miami in 2016 said. "Philadelphia, they have three different receivers that can do different things [in Jeffery, Torrey Smith and Nelson Agholor]."

Eagles WR depth chart

WR1 Alshon Jeffery
WR2 Torrey Smith
Slot WR Nelson Agholor
WR4 Mack Hollins
WR5 Marcus Johnson
Fighting for spot Bryce Treggs, Shelton Gibson, Greg Ward Jr., Paul Turner, David Watford, Rashard Davis

Maxwell on former team the Eagles: 'I want to prove them wrong'

There was a lot of fanfare when the Eagles signed free agent cornerback Byron Maxwell to a huge contract in Chip Kelly's final year, back in 2015.

There was very little when he was shipped away to Miami a year later.

Maxwell says he never heard from Doug Pederson after Kelly was fired, and suspected he might be traded.

But Maxwell, who was in town with the Dolphins as the two teams scrimmaged against eachother at the NovaCare Complex Monday, said he understood why he was traded.

"It was obvious they needed a quarterback," he said.

The Eagles used the draft pick acquired in the trade to trade up for the Browns' No. 2 overall pick to take Carson Wentz. And even though Maxwell is content in his new Southern Florida home — and understands the nature of the NFL as a business — he wants to beat the Eagles. Bad.

"I would be lying if I told you I don't want to do better than the Eagles do. I do," Maxwell said. "I want to win more games than them, I want to prove them wrong."

It wasn't all bad for Maxwell, however. Since getting to Miami the corner has been through a lot, including a brief benching. He said his experiences in Philly prepared him for hardship down the line.

Byron Maxwell says he feels right at home in Miami. GETTY IMAGES

"The things that happened in Philly made me a better leader for Miami," Maxwell said.

When asked if he felt like the Eagles, who have been looking for cornerback help since he left (but may have found their man in the recently acquired Ronald Darby) missed him more than they expected to, Maxwell told reporters a simple "yes."

Maxwell said he did not feel sentimental returning to his 2015 home since it was just a year — though he does miss some of his teammates.

One of whom, Nelson Agholor, is the only remaining wide receiver he used to cover in practice. And like the Eagles' front office and coaching staff, he can attest to why the Birds made the right choice in retaining Agholor to play the slot while trading Jordan Matthews to the Bills.

"Nelson, we knew then that Nelson was going to be good," Maxwell said. "He had all the tools. He was willing to learn and he asked questions. I new he was going to be a solid receiver."

EVAN MACY

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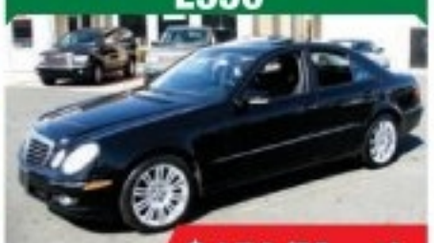
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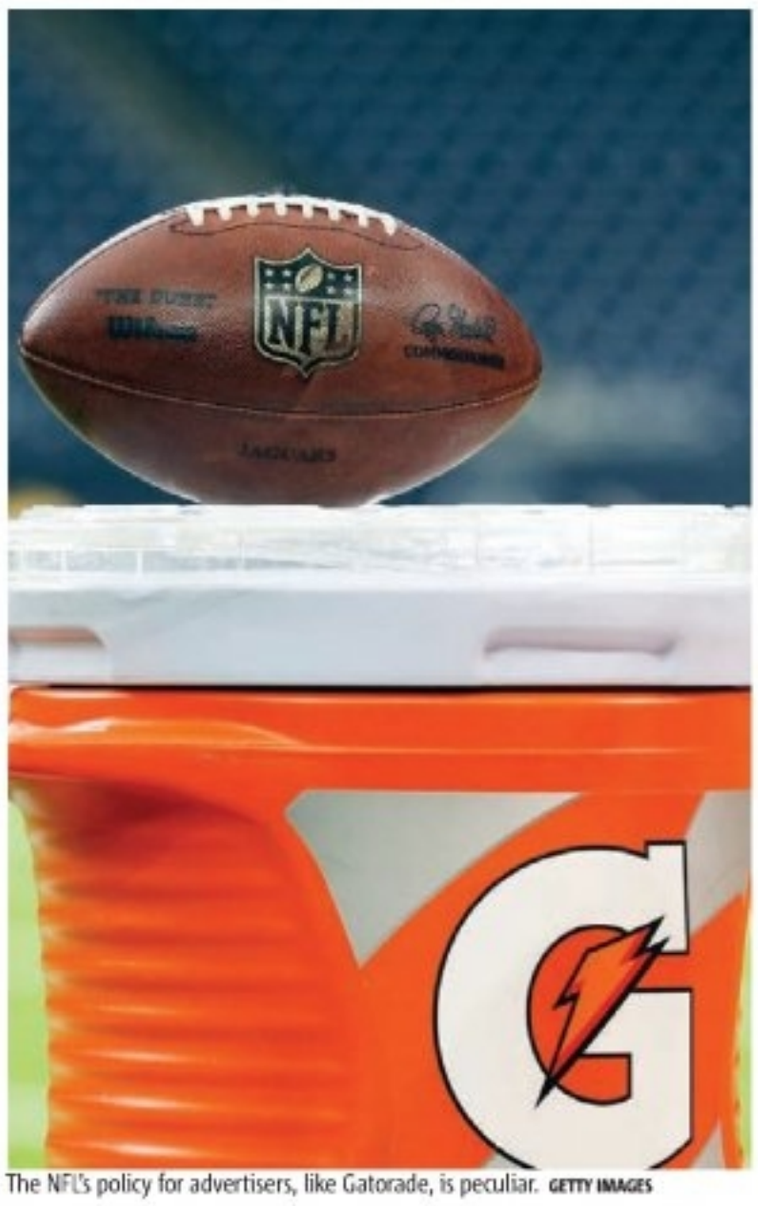

The NFL's policy for advertisers, like Gatorade, is peculiar. GETTY IMAGES

Every fan has that one feature of NFL broadcasts that annoys him the most — whether it's momentum-stopping instant replays, sideline reporters or, starting this week, broadcaster Tony Romo.

For me, it has long been those erectile dysfunction medication ads. Like every parent who ever watched with the kids, I struggled through those spots. A woman in a rip-off Lions jersey purrs about post-game "huddling with her man," while a narrator issues the scariest warning ever: "To avoid long-term injury, seek immediate help for an erection lasting more than four hours." Ouch.

Since 2004, Viagra and Cialis have been among the sport's sturdiest advertisers. Last season, they spent $50 million during NFL broadcasts. Now, you should pardon the pun, they are pulling out.

The NFL has revised its ad policies this season, but this isn't about that. This is about patent law. The companies providing those products saw their exclusivity rights expire, so any ads they run may soon benefit generic knockoffs. Viagra has ceased advertising altogether, while Cialis is running out the clock on spots featuring that hand-holding couple in his-and-hers bathtubs.

I won't miss them.

To an extent, they'll be replaced by a good, stiff drink. The NFL, a league economically fueled by beer, is accepting hard liquor ads for the first time. There's a limit to four such spots per game, the ads may not have a football theme and each must be accompanied by that "drink responsibly" message that I'll bet no one has ever paid attention to.

I'm fascinated by the intricate guidelines of which ads the league will and won't accept. While ED medicine is still allowed, birth control is not — meaning, I suppose, the NFL approves of you having sex, just don't do it responsibly.

Beer and, now, liquor is OK. But high-potency energy drinks, like Red Bull and Rockstar, are not. Gatorade, which markets a full line of supplements, is approved — but retailer GNC is banned. I'm sure that stems from the number of athletes who claimed to fail a drug test after buying an over-the-counter product at GNC.

Gambling remains a thorny issue for the hypocritical league, which allows casino signs at the stadium but no such TV ads during its games. And while marijuana is now legal in eight states, the NFL doesn't want its fans getting high any more than it wants players doing so.

All of this is important because one hour of the typical three-hour NFL broadcast is devoted to commercials. The average game includes 20 breaks crammed with 100 separate ads.

By contrast, a Wall Street Journal calculation once determined the ball is actually in play for just 11 minutes per game. Another 17 minutes are devoted to replays.

The league is cutting the number of breaks this season, curtailing the "double-up" – which is a score, then a commercial, then a kickoff, then another commercial. But don't assume fewer breaks translate to fewer ads. They'll just be more bunched up.

And you know what? We'll still watch. Football is our game, numbing ads and all. So I'll toast my favorite sport.

Just not with a Red Bull.

Sir Charles believes in "The Process." EVAN MACY

Barkley 'shocked and disappointed if the Sixers don't make the playoffs'

The Sixers have more than a dozen nationally televised games scheduled for 2017-18. They a season ticket waiting list for the first time in more than a decade and have been the subject of a bevy of optimistic predictions.

And now, even ormer Sixers' great and TNT basketball commentator Charles Barkley is drinking "The Process" Kool Aid.

"I'd be totally shocked and disappointed if the Sixers don't make the playoffs," Barkley said Monday at Eagles training camp, where he was attending with Billy Cunningham as a guest of the team. "The Sixers are going to make the playoffs. If they're healthy, I don't see any way they don't make the playoffs. I love [Joel] Embiid, Ben Simmons, he has a bright future. They have Markelle Fultz, [Dario] Saric should have been rookie of the year."

Barkley, who is an Auburn alum and a big football fan, watched the Eagles and Dolphins compete in the first of two joint practices Monday — commenting that he thinks it gets boring when teams practice against themselves constantly and thinks it is a good idea for the NFL to start mixing it up. He also spoke high praise for Philly's other favorite team.

"I have been here since 1984," Barkely, a former fifth overall pick, said. "It's the first place I ever lived that had a pro franchise. Coming from Alabama, we didn't have that. One thing I realize is no matter how much success the Phillies and Sixers have, this is a football town. I have always rooted for the Eagles.

"Eagles and Sixers, if youre a Philadelphia fan you have to be really excited about the next 10 years."

And his scouting report for the Eagles?

"Everybody is excited about Carson [Wentz]," Barkely said. "He had a good rookie year and they went out and got him some more weapons. It's going to be close for the playoffs. It's a tough division, but they have a chance. EVAN MACY

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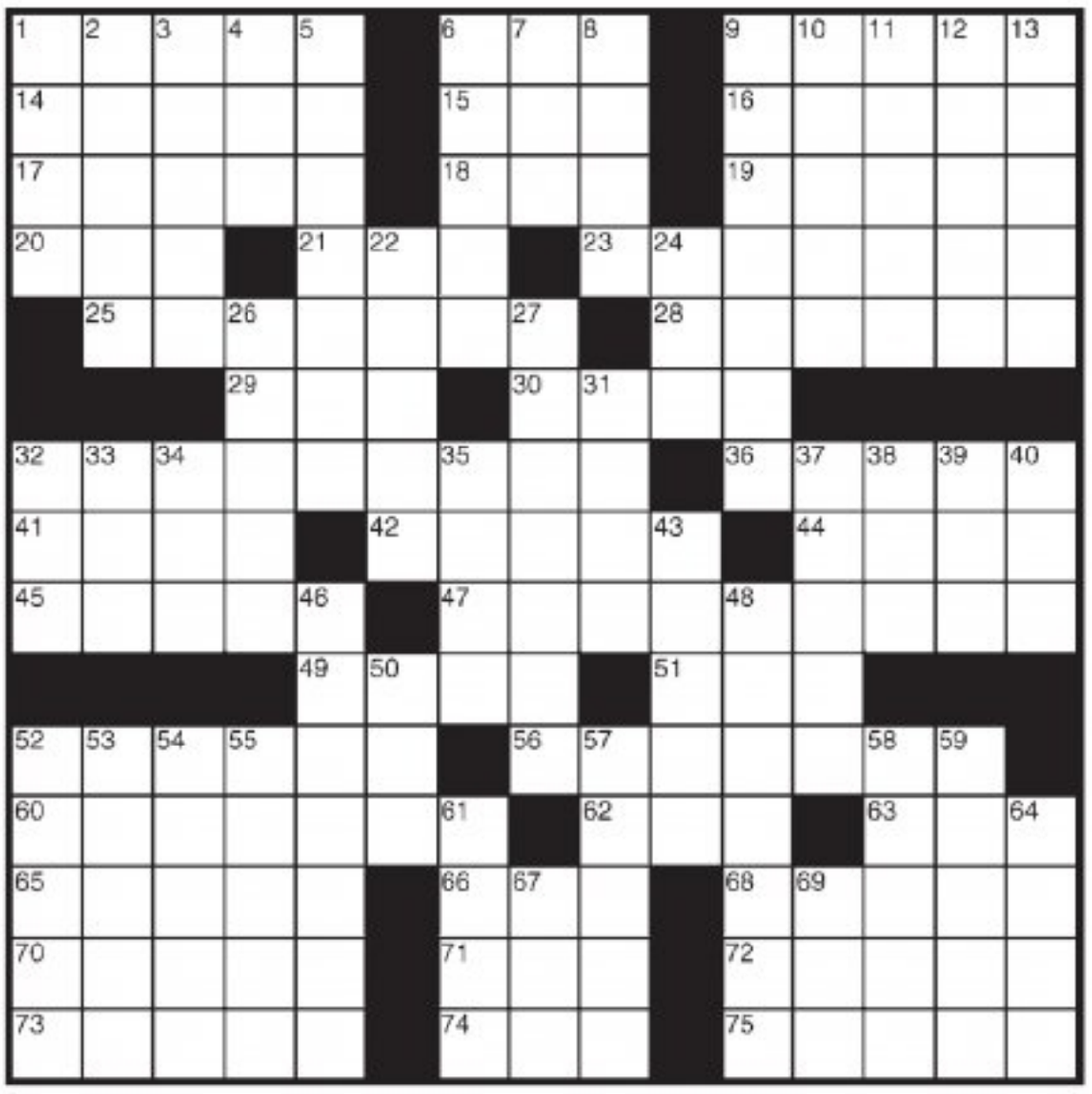
Across

1 Physicist Nikola –
6 "Oh, gross!"
9 Rescued
14 Be of use
15 Bridal notice word
16 Serviceable
17 Earn
18 Wham!
19 Tie-dye cousin
20 Mexican Mrs.
21 Sonnet cousin
23 Tell a story
25 Done
28 Got mud on
29 Capt.'s heading
30 Hi-fi components
32 Put into words
36 Boundary
41 Feel sympathy for
42 Rudely sarcastic
44 Subtle glow
45 Shop items
47 Gave up hope
49 Plays with idly
51 Munich single
52 Piece of china
56 – hangs a tale
60 Firm, as pasta (2 wds.)
62 Lisper's problem
63 Music category
65 Wolf-pack member (hyph.)
66 IRS payment
68 Whodunit suspects
70 Scandinavian
71 Fruit drink
72 Broken mirrors, maybe
73 Jacket choice
74 Boy
75 Deli item

Down

1 Soft caps
2 Turn inside out
3 Abraham's wife
4 Weeks per annum?
5 Pennsylvania coal town
6 Let float, as a currency
7 College maj.
8 Shaped with an ax
9 Privately (2 wds.)
10 Video-game pioneer
11 Very important
12 The upper crust
13 Faked out
22 Pistol fights
24 Viper
26 Rise up
27 Foggiest
31 Pills, briefly
32 Dye container
33 Environmental prefix
34 Sorority letter
35 Memorial Day race
37 Orono's state
38 Clingy seedpod
39 Temper
40 Tiny amount
43 Triangular swords
46 Dwarfed
48 Fliers' performance
50 Cast a vote
52 Gibe
53 Pipe bend
54 Be crazy about
55 Stop
57 Put the whammy on
58 Prickly twig
59 Tales
61 Etc. relative (2 wds.)
64 Attention getter
67 Nabokov book
69 Rhea relative



metro.us/sudoku

easy

2	5	9			6			
		6	4		5		9	
	8	7	3					
		4		7				8
		2				9		
7				1		4		
					2	7	8	
	7		1		3	2		
			8			3	1	4

hard

				3	8	7	2	
	8	2	1					
						1	4	8
		4	5	6	9			
9								6
			8	7	3	9		
1	2	5						
					5	3	6	
	3	9	4	1				

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Be responsible for your actions. Offer to make reasonable changes if it will help keep the peace with someone you live or work with.

Taurus A steady pace and comprehensive plan will help you achieve your goal. Someone unique or unexpected will step up and offer valuable information or help.

Gemini An emotional situation will leave you questioning a certain relationship. Look for alternative ways to protect your status without compromising an important partnership.

Cancer Stick to the way you are used to doing things. If someone is being impulsive, don't follow suit. A sensible approach to life and entertainment will protect against loss.

Leo Embrace a challenge that requires energy, skill and endurance. You'll master whatever you try hard to achieve. Changes at home will turn out to your liking.

Virgo Partnerships are best dealt with fairly and diplomatically. Your intuition will help you make the right choice regarding someone who is dependent on you.

Libra An emotional situation will trouble you. Don't share personal feelings or information with your peers. Take care of your responsibilities and tend to personal issues secretively.

Scorpio You'll instinctively know and understand what to do and the best way to reach your goal. Dismiss anyone trying to tempt you to do things differently.

Sagittarius Certain emotions will stand between you and the truth. Facts will be offered, but it's up to you whether to believe or ignore what you discover.

Capricorn Review your finances before you make a purchase or invest in something that has the potential to turn into a money pit. Only take on what you can handle.

Aquarius Gather information that will help you formulate the best way to deal with a financial or health matter. The more you know, the harder it is to be manipulated.

Pisces Be open-minded when asked to make changes to the way you do your job. Being reluctant to something new will make you seem difficult to get along with. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

L	O	A	F	S	■	Y	O	K	E	L	■	N	C	O
O	W	L	E	T	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	A	R	T
P	E	T	E	R	■	M	A	Y	A	N	■	M	A	T
■	■	L	A	B	E	L	■	■	I	R	E	N	E	■
R	U	F	F	I	A	N	■	S	P	E	E	D	E	R
O	N	I	O	N	S	■	S	T	O	N	E	■	■	■
O	D	O	R	S	■	W	H	I	T	T	L	E	R	S
F	U	R	■	■	S	A	I	L	S	■	■	D	O	C
S	E	D	U	C	T	I	V	E	■	A	N	I	M	A
■	■	K	O	A	L	A	■	G	R	A	C	E	D	■
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S	L	O	S	H	■	■	R	E	V	E	L	■	■	■
C	O	Y	■	I	M	B	U	E	■	A	G	A	P	E
O	R	E	■	S	T	E	E	R	■	R	U	L	E	R
T	A	R	■	E	V	A	D	E	■	S	N	I	P	E

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